

REPORT

OF THE FREDERICTON DISTRICT COMMITTEE OF THE
SOCIETY FOR PROMOTING CHRISTIAN KNOWLEDGE.

In presenting this Annual Report of the Fredericton District Committee of the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge to the Public, we are sensible that an apology is due from us to that Committee for having so long deferred executing the task committed to us: suffice it to say, that the delay has been in a great measure occasioned by causes and circumstances beyond our controul. We now proceed to make our Report, as comprehensively as the brevity to which we must confine ourselves will admit. With the nature and history of the Parent Society we presume that most of our readers are acquainted, as ample information upon this very interesting subject has been communicated to the public in general, as well as to our own Members in particular, in the Sermons and Reports of the Society annually transmitted to us.

From the Report for 1826 it appears, that during the course of the preceding twelve months, the Society had distributed Books and Tracts to the amount of 1,490,691—of which there were 68,008 Bibles, 83,556 New Testaments and Psalters, Common Prayer Books 165,152. Other bound books 95,233. Small Tracts, half-bound, 914,742. Books and Papers for gratuitous distribution 162,600. The expenditure amounted to £65,314 16 5.

The progress which Christianity has made in the remote and vast regions of India (the Inhabitants of which had long sat in darkness and in the shadow of Death.) in consequence of the zealous exertions of this Society, aided by those for the propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts, and the details of which are set forth in the Report alluded to, must afford the most heartfelt gratification to all those who take a lively interest in the advancement of the Redeemer's Kingdom in the World. In the West Indies, in this and our Sister Colonies, their exertions have been very great, and have been, as we have every reason to believe, attended with the happiest success.

We regret that our limits will not permit us to enter further into this subject; and we earnestly recommend an attentive perusal of this Report, and the very excellent Sermon of the Lord Bishop of Landaff, which accompanies it, to the Public in general.

We now come to give some account of the Proceedings and Designs of this District Committee, with which we are more immediately concerned.

“At the Annual Meeting, held in January last, the Committee proceeded to the Election of Office Bearers, when the following gentlemen were unanimously chosen, viz.,

President,	The ATTORNEY GENERAL.
Vice President,	The Honorable Judge BLISS.
Secretary,	The Venerable Archdeacon BEST.
Assistant,	The Rev. GEORGE M'CAWLEY.
Treasurer,	JEDEDIAH SLASON, Esquire.

“The Treasurer exhibited his accounts, wherein it appears, that this Committee is indebted to the Parent Society for Books, &c., the sum of £133 4 8½. That Books and Tracts to the amount of £49 13 4½ had been distributed, gratuitously, during the course of the year, by the Venerable Archdeacon, and the Rev. Messrs. Bacon and Somerville. The whole amount of Books disposed of during 1826, exclusive of lending Libraries, amounted to £77 7 10.

“The Treasurer reports that two lending Libraries have been received, one of which has been delivered to the Rev. J. Somerville for the Parish of Douglas, and the other to the Rev. Raper Milner, for the Parish of Mougerville, according to a Resolution of the Committee.

“Resolved, that a lending Library be imported for the Parish of Kent, and two others also to be disposed of as may be thought fit hereafter, and that Books to the amount of £50 be imported, exclusive of lending Libraries.

“The Secretary reported that His Excellency the Lieutenant Governor, on being presented with a copy of the late Report,

agreeably to a Resolution of the Committee, gave an assurance of his countenance and support to this Committee.

“The Rev. Dr. Thompson was requested by the Committee to preach the Annual Sermon; with which request that gentleman was pleased to comply, and delivered on the 18th January, in the Parish Church here, a Sermon of very superior excellence on the occasion.

“Resolved also, that Lady Douglas, and other Ladies, be requested to become Subscribing Members of this Committee.

“It was also ordered that the Rev. Mr. Best, and the Rev. Mr. Somerville do prepare a Report of the Proceedings of the Committee during the last year, to be published in the Royal Gazette, and that the Parent Society, the Lord Bishop, and the Lieutenant Governor, be furnished with copies.

“Resolved unanimously, that the thanks of this Committee be given to J. Slason, Esq., Treasurer, for the great care and trouble he has so disinterestedly taken in the management of the affairs of this Committee.”

It will be seen from the foregoing brief abstract, that the affairs of this Society are in a very promising state, and that its Members have ample encouragement to proceed zealously in that good work, which has hitherto been so successfully carried on.

It is but little good, comparatively speaking, that any individual, however gifted, can perform when left to his own solitary exertions; but when men are joined and associated together in the prosecution of one common object—particularly of that in which they may humbly hope for the blessing of the Almighty—the benefits to mankind may be incalculable: Therefore let us proceed as we have begun, with zeal and alacrity, without the least parade or ostentation, and without making any invidious comparisons between our own Society and others who profess to have the same object in view.

We beg leave to make a remark or two before concluding. That the primary object of every religious Society (at least among Protestants) is the dissemination of the Word of God, it is a truth indisputable. And that the Parent Society, as well as the several District Committees, have kept this great object continually in view, will manifestly appear from the great proportion of Bibles and New Testaments annually disposed of. Every attempt therefore to illustrate and explain those Divine Writings, and to make them more level to the capacities of the illiterate, ought preeminently to be encouraged. Allow us therefore to recommend the Family Bible, published some years ago, by Mant and Doyley, to the particular attention of all those who may have it in their power to procure it. By the beneficence of the Parent Society, this work can now be had fifty per cent cheaper than heretofore. The Notes and Illustrations are judiciously selected from the Works of the most eminent Divines and Commentators, both of our own and other Nations, whose learned labours have elucidated the Sacred Writings in many important instances, relative both to Faith and Practice.

The Institution of lending Libraries, now beginning to be established among us, give us every reason to hope for the most beneficial results. The Books and Tracts of which the Libraries are composed, have long been on the Lists of the Societies Catalogues, and their value has been highly appreciated by all who have had an opportunity of being acquainted with them. The sincere Inquirer after the Truth will find in those Treatises the most satisfactory and edifying information upon the Word of God, the Church of God, and the Christian Life, the three grand Subjects, which ought chiefly to occupy the Minds and engage the Affections of the sincere Followers of our Blessed Lord. The Books and Tracts themselves (with very few exceptions) are of the first order, being eminent for fervour of piety, soundness of reason, extent of information, and not a few of them are remarkable for beauty of Language and for perspicuity and elegance of Composition.

Many may have now an opportunity which they never had before, of inquiring into the Doctrine and Discipline, into the validity of the Ordinances, and the Apostolical succession of the Clergy of the Church established among us, and of judging for themselves. And we would earnestly exhort Christians of all Sects and Denominations, that laying aside all party spirit, fac-